

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Self-Study Report

Milford School District
SAU 40

June 2002

***All children are everyone's responsibility
and meeting the standards is possible for
all learners.***

- Matlock, Fielder & Walsh - 2001

Year Long Program Review Team:

Name:

Role:

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Introduction: The Process

The NH DOE is required to monitor how local school districts implement State and Federal guidelines in relation to special education. General annual monitoring is conducted through the SPEDIS system, which provides pertinent student information to the state at least annually. More in-depth analysis of local districts is required every five years to maintain program approval at the local level.

The Milford School District was due for in-depth review during the 2001-2002 school year. Two choices were made available to the district:

1. Regulatory Compliance Visit: Comprised of both internal and external team members to review student files at each level to determine the compliance of paperwork.
2. A research based, outcome oriented, year-long process of evaluating the special education department's functioning in the provision of quality programs for youth with disabilities within the Milford School District. Choice number one is inherent within this process in addition to the research component.

Due to the Districts' commitment to the ongoing improvement of education for all youth in the attainment of our goals, the latter option of study was chosen.

A diverse team comprised of regular and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, level administrators, district wide administrators, a school board member, and a representative from SERESC, met monthly to seek answers to the essential question they jointly developed, "What does standards-based education for all students look like?"

Over the course of several months, rubrics were developed for use in field-based research to establish a baseline of our current status. The group was divided into sub-teams to deeply analyze our status in the following areas:

- *What would the curriculum look like?*
- *How would student progress be assessed and monitored?*
- *What would the IEP process and paperwork look like?*
- *What types of instructional strategies would be used in the classroom?*
- *How would support and special assistance for students needs be delivered?*

General themes of both strengths and needs were identified based upon the research gathered as well as from the compliance visit. Based upon those themes, goals and objectives for the special education department have been developed for the next five years. This comprehensive report is a reflection of the work completed, and the work we intend to complete in the next five years.

Research Report: Curriculum

**Tony DeMarco
Cathy Croteau**

What would the curriculum look like?

To respond to this question, we decided that we would develop a survey to be distributed to all professional teaching staff in the district. Of all the surveys distributed, thirty-eight percent were returned. The surveys returned were equally distributed amongst all three levels. The survey, consisting of ten "yes or no" questions, with optional comments, was designed to be answered quickly and efficiently. This allowed for the high return rate that we received.

Our survey was developed based on the rubric focus question, "What would the curriculum look like?" developed by the entire SPEDMIP committee. We extrapolated ten questions based upon the levels of performance listed in the rubric. The questions were related to the standards, the frameworks, individualized education plans, access to the general curriculum, and integration with other curriculum areas.

After the surveys were returned, we tallied the "yes" and "no" responses and compiled the comments both by school and as a district. Quantitatively, we found that all respondents are familiar with the frameworks and standards. However, the comments described various levels of familiarity ranging from those who use standards on a daily basis in designing lessons to others who would like to have a copy of the standards.

Two-thirds of the respondents say that they have or are in the process of aligning their curriculum to the frameworks. However, we know that district-wide, math is the only curriculum being aligned. This shows that at least two-thirds of all staff are trying to independently align their curriculum with the state standards. The comments show us however, that there are inconsistencies with the alignment.

Ninety-eight percent of all respondents believe that the curriculum is appropriate for all students. However, when looking at the quantitative data of some of the other questions and the comment section it is clear that one-third felt that the curriculum does not take into account the different developmental levels of the students and is not flexible enough to meet the needs of all students. Therefore, we question the level of access that all students have to the general curriculum.

Another point that is evident is that at least one-half of all respondents integrate their curriculum with one or more subject areas. Also, two-thirds of the respondents feel that the IEP goals and objectives are realistic in regards to the curriculum. It is interesting to note, however, that the majority of the comments received indicate that there needs to be improvement in this area leading us to question the consistency in the writing of the IEP goals and objectives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the data show that the curriculum provides access to meet the needs and ability level of all students with appropriate accommodations. In terms of the rubric scoring for "What would the curriculum look like?" the data indicates that we currently fall at "Just Learning." It is difficult to ensure that IEP goals and objectives are fully aligned with the curriculum. In the meantime, until all curriculum areas have been aligned, an interim plan needs to be developed to address this access to the general curriculum issue.

<i>What would the curriculum look like?</i>	
Got it!	<p>The curriculum is standards-based and fully aligned with instruction and assessment.</p> <p>The curriculum is challenging for all students.</p> <p>The regular curriculum includes benchmarks at all grade levels. The IEP is based on the regular curriculum.</p> <p>There is flexibility within the curriculum to meet the needs of all students.</p> <p>Curriculum is integrated across all subject areas; writing across the curriculum is emphasized.</p>
Almost there...	<p>The curriculum takes into account the different developmental levels of students.</p> <p>The alignment of the curriculum with standards, instruction and assessment is nearly complete.</p> <p>Teachers are differentiating the curriculum as they consider different learning stages and abilities.</p>
Just learning	<p>Expectations for student learning defined. There are smooth transitions between grade levels.</p> <p>Curriculum is being aligned with standards, instruction and assessment.</p> <p>Special education teachers and regular education teachers are collaborating to align the curriculum.</p>
Not yet	<p>The curriculum is based on what has already been there or what is in the textbooks.</p>

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question: What would the curriculum look like?		
Data Source: Survey		
Data Collection Method		
Information needed: to determine if the curriculum is varied, aligned to the standards, aligned between grade levels meets the needs of all students		
Focus question(s): Does the curriculum meet the needs of all students? Is the curriculum aligned with the standards?		
Reporting strategy(s): One grid for tallies One grid for comments		
Resources needed: Surveys returned from teachers		
Responsibility Action Matrix		
Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1. letter to teachers	Cathy	
2. survey	Tony	
3. collector of surveys	Cathy and Tony	
4. survey tallies	Cathy	
5. survey comments	Tony	

RESPONSES TO SURVEY FOR "What would curriculum look like?" COMPONENT

	MES	MMS	MHS	SAGE	ALL	
1) Are you familiar with the Frameworks and Standards in your area?	yes:	19	27	17	1	64
	no:	0	0	0	0	0
2) Have you aligned your units to address the Standards in your area?	yes:	17	26	13	1	57
	no:	5	2	3	0	10
3) Do you feel the curriculum is flexible enough to meet the needs of all of your students?	yes:	13	23	12	1	49
	no:	7	8	4	0	19
4) Are units in your curriculum integrated with:	math:	12	10	9	1	32
	science	7	13	6	1	27
	english	11	17	9	0	37
	social studies	9	17	6	0	32
5) Are IEP goals and objectives realistically	unified arts	5	10	6	0	21
	yes:	15	19	13	1	48

defined in regards to your curriculum?						
6) Does the curriculum take into account the different developmental levels of the students?	no:	6	5	3	0	14
	yes:	12	16	8	1	37
7) Is your curriculum currently aligned between grade levels?	no:	5	8	1	0	14
	yes:	10	10	6	1	27
8) Do all students have access to the general curriculum?	no:	6	8	2	0	16
	yes:	16	25	8	1	50
9) Do you consult regularly with the special education teacher assigned to your students?	no:	0	1	0	0	1
	yes:	13	24	10	1	48
10) When developing curriculum, what resources have you used?	no:	2	6	0	0	8
		-curriculum guides -professional materials and magazines - websites / technology - AV materials - Project Read - Math their way / box it, bag it math - workshop materials - standards - books and supplementary materials - videos - museums- teachers from other NH schools - curriculum from other districts - teacher knowledge/experience - manipulatives - language circle - library -safety standards - competencies - past experience -project lead the way - other teacher's notes / guidance - textbooks/workbooks - industry catalogs/trade journals - meeting with others in state from same curriculum - SCANS - State of NH standards - National Association Standards - internet - current events - simulations -tech link corp. - video - workshops - NH state tests				

SPEDMIP Curriculum Survey

Please return to either Cathy Croteau at the High School or Tony DeMarco at the Middle School by March 15th. Thank you.

Grade Level (please circle): MES MMS MHS Curriculum Area: _____

1. Are you familiar with the Frameworks and Standards in your area? YES NO

Comment:

2. Have you aligned your units to address the Standards in your area? YES NO

Comment:

3. Do you feel the curriculum is flexible enough to meet the needs of all your students?

YES NO

Comment:

4. Are units in your curriculum integrated with:

_____Math _____Science _____English _____Social Studies _____Unified Arts

Comment:

5. Are IEP goals and objectives realistically defined in regards to your curriculum?

YES NO

Comment:

6. Does the curriculum take into account the different developmental levels of the students?

YES NO

Comment:

7. Is your curriculum currently aligned between grade levels? YES NO

Comment:

8. Do all students have access to the general curriculum? YES NO

Comment:

9. Do you consult regularly with the special education teacher assigned to your students? YES NO

Comment:

10. When developing curriculum, what resources have you used? (please list them in the space provided)

Research Report: Student Progress

**Barbara Jean Ellis
Marianne Carvell**

How would student progress be assessed and monitored?

Our focus area was student assessment. We selected to use a survey and a collection of assessments to answer our focus questions: How is a student's progress being assessed and monitored? Are teachers using a variety of classroom assessments? Are the assessments appropriate for both regular education and special education students?

The goal of the survey was to gain knowledge of assessments currently used in order to determine areas that need to be addressed to reach our goal of "Got It." A letter and survey were sent to the Elementary, Middle and High School staffs. Twenty-five letters were sent to each school to be distributed randomly to the staff. Of the seventy-five surveys sent, a total of sixteen were completed and returned, 3 from the Elementary School, 3 from the Middle School and 6 from the High School for a return rate of 21%.

As we reviewed the results, we observed that 88% of those who responded do not yet have an understanding of the NHEIAP Alt, and 17% have the "Got It" goal. The responses to the questions regarding communication process used between parents, special education teachers and regular education teachers when assessing student process indicate that current practices are unclear and inconsistent. The responses to the question asking whose responsibility it is to evaluate student's progress indicate further inconsistencies. The responses to the question on the survey regarding assessments used to show progression between grade levels again show great variance in practices currently used.

Our second research design involved analysis of classroom assessments currently used to determine if they are varied and appropriate for all students. A letter was sent to both regular education teachers and special education teachers requesting a sampling of assessments used in classrooms. Seventy-five letters were sent, 25 to each school. Of the 75 sent, twenty-two (22) assessments were received, a 29% return rate.

The samples of assessment were reviewed, and the results showed that at the High School, 69% of the samples were appropriate for both regular education and special education students. At the Middle and Elementary schools 67% of the assessments received were appropriate for both.

To summarize, the survey results showed inconsistencies in the area of assessment which lead us to ask, "Should there be more research done in this area?" and "Were the questions posed unclear?" Our results may also be effected because there is a discrepancy in the percentages reported. The Elementary School results were reported by a team of teachers, and the Middle School and High School teachers reported their results individually.

When considering the results of the assessment review, it is appropriate to note given the wide range of disabilities, it was difficult to assess whether some of the assessments provided were appropriate for both regular education and special education students. We were also disappointed with the number of responses we received. Because of this, we do not know if we have a fair and accurate portrayal of the school district.

In conclusion, further study in this area is indicated to provide a clearer focus for assessment needs. At this point, the district falls between the "Not Yet" and "Just Learning" categories on the rubric for assessment. Once those needs are more clearly identified, staff development would be beneficial to build more consistency among and across grades in the area of assessment. There is also a need to instruct special education and regular education teachers in the NHEIAP Alt and how it is used. An increase in collaboration between regular education and specialized education is necessary to provide the ongoing assessment of students as indicated by the rubric.

<i>How would student progress be assessed and monitored?</i>	
Got it!	<p>Student progress is measured on an ongoing basis through varied assessments that relate directly to the IEP. When appropriate, students are able to choose how they will be assessed.</p> <p>Special education and regular education teachers share the responsibility for monitoring and evaluating student progress.</p> <p>A system for measuring progress toward achievement of grade level benchmarks is established and appropriately differentiated for individual students. Indicators of progress are clear and linked to assessment of the IEP. IEP's are monitored and adjusted based on assessment data.</p> <p>All teachers understand the procedures and resources for the NHEIAP ALT.</p> <p>Students, parents, special education and regular education staff communicate on a regular basis to ensure student progress.</p>
Almost there...	<p>Student progress is measured on an ongoing basis through varied assessments.</p> <p>Special education and regular education teachers collaborate to monitor and evaluate student progress.</p> <p>A system for measuring progress toward achievement of benchmarks is established and applies to all students.</p> <p>Indicators of progress are linked to the IEP</p> <p>IEP's are monitored and adjusted based on student needs.</p> <p>All special education teachers understand the procedures and resources for the NHEIAP ALT.</p> <p>Efforts are made to use various methods (report cards, conferences, special education meetings, portfolios...) to communicate progress to parents and students.</p>
Just learning	<p>Student progress is measured on a regular basis or varied assessments are used to measure student progress.</p> <p>Special education and regular education teachers monitor student progress, and evaluation is the responsibility of special education.</p> <p>Most goals of the IEP are measured and the results are used to plan for students.</p> <p>Special ed teachers who case manage a student involved in the NHEIAP ALT understand it and follow the procedures correctly.</p> <p>Teachers are experimenting with rubrics, checklists, performance assessments, ... to clarify expectations for student learning.</p> <p>Report cards and teacher conferences are used to communicate with parents.</p>
Not yet	<p>A single measure is used to determine student progress.</p> <p>Special ed and regular ed have different expectations and systems for monitoring student progress.</p> <p>The IEP does not designate how goals are measured.</p> <p>IEP goals are based on a single evaluation.</p> <p>There is little understanding of the NHEIAP ALT process.</p> <p>Communication with parents and students is minimal.</p>

Summary of Results: Student Assessment

A survey of student assessments was sent to the Elementary, Middle and High Schools (please refer to the attached questionnaire). As the completed surveys were returned, we compiled the data on a matrix to clearly show the teacher's understanding of the NHEIAP ALT and how the student's progress is being monitored.

The results were broken down into four categories:

- Not Yet
- Just Learning
- Almost There
- Got It

1. What is your understanding of the NEHIAP ALT?	Not Yet	81%
	Got It	19%
2. Who is responsible for the NHEIAP ALT?	Not Yet	88%
	Got It	13%
3. What does the NHEIAP ALT assess?	Not Yet	88%
	Got It	13%
4. When assessing student's progress, what methods are used to communicate with parents, special ed, or regular ed teachers?	Not Yet	38%
	Just Getting There	38%
	Almost There	13%
	Got It	19%
5. Whose responsibility is it to monitor and evaluate student's progress and IEP goals?	Not Yet	25%
	Just Getting There	19%
	Almost There	19%
	Got It	38%
6. In measuring student's progression of goals, as stated in the IEP, what types of assessments are used to show cumulative progress towards grade levels?	Not Yet	69%
	Just Getting There	6%
	Almost There	6%
	Got It	19%

Note: It is our understanding that each grade in the Elementary School compiled their results as a team. This was not true for the Middle and High Schools.

As we reviewed the results, it was our observation that most of the teachers in this District do not have an understanding of the NEIAP ALT. We also observed that overall, the goals "Got It," has not been reached according to the goals as were developed by the SPEDMIP committee. A large percentage is in the "Not Yet" area.

We also requested a variety of samples of assessments from various teachers at each school. Our focus questions were: Are teachers using a variety of classroom assessments? Are the assessments appropriate for both regular education and special education students?

Our results are as follows:

High School	Appropriate for both:	69%
	Inappropriate for both:	15%
	Unsure:	15%
Middle School	Appropriate for both:	67%
	Inappropriate for both:	33%
	Unsure:	0%
Elementary School	Appropriate for both:	67%
	Inappropriate for both:	33%
	Unsure:	0%

Viewing the information that we acquired, we conclude that there is a need for further development in the area of assessments for special education students.

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question: How would student progress be assessed and monitored?		
Data Source: Survey of Milford School District Professionals		
Data Collection Method		
Information needed: To gain knowledge of assessments currently used in order to assess what areas need to be addressed to reach out goal of <i>Got It</i>.		
Focus question(s): How is students progress currently being assessed and monitored?		
Reporting strategy(s): Survey		
Resources needed: Survey question, cover letter, matrix for documenting data		
Responsibility Action Matrix		
Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1. Complete survey	Marianne Carvell Barbara Jean Ellis	February 11, 2002
2. Write cover letter to district staff	Marianne Carvell Barbara Jean Ellis	February 11, 2002
3. Complete a matrix to document data collected	Marianne Carvell Barbara Jean Ellis	March 2, 2002
4. Collect surveys from district staff	Barbara Jean Ellis	March 2, 2002
5. Meet with partner to discuss our findings	Barbara Jean Ellis Marianne Carvell	March 21, 2002
6. Submit data collected and matrix to Laurie Johnson at the SAU.	Barbara Jean Ellis	March 22, 2002
7.		
8.		

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process

Research Design Template

Research Question: How would student progress be assessed and monitored?

Data Source: Classroom assessments collected from district staff.

Data Collection Method

Information needed: To observe whether assessments currently used are varied and good for all students.

Focus question(s): Are teachers using a variety of classroom assessments?
Are assessments appropriate for both regular education and special education students?

Reporting strategy(s): Matrix

Resources needed: Various assessments from teachers.

Responsibility Action Matrix

Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1. Review and revise the matrix provide by Laurie Johnson.	Marianne Carvell Barbara Jean Ellis	February 11, 2002
2. Write a cover letter requesting assessments from teachers	Marianne Carvell Barbara Jean Ellis	February 11, 2002
3. Collect and review assessments received by teachers	Marianne Carvell	March 2, 2002
4. Complete matrix with information received	Marianne Carvell	March 21, 2002
5. Meet with partner to discuss finding	Marianne Carvell Barbara Jean Ellis	March 21, 2002
6. Submit data collected and matrix to Laurie Johnson at the SAU.	Marianne Carvell	March 22, 2002
7.		
8.		

Reporting Strategy: Matrix

Compiling Data From Assessment Survey

Focus Question: How is student progress being assessed?

Questions	Not yet	Just learning	Almost there	Got it	Total		
					Elem.	Middle	High
What is your understanding of the NHEIAP ALT?	E, E, M, M, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H			E, H, H	N-2 G-1	N-3	N-8 G-2
Who is responsible for the NHEIAP ALT?	E, E, M, M, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H			E, H	N-2 G-1	N-3	N-9 G-1
What does the NHEIAP ALT assess?	E, E, M, M, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H			E, H, H	N-2 G-1	N-3	H-8 G-2
When assessing students progress, what methods are used to communicate with parents, special ed, or regular ed teachers?	H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	E, M, M, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	E, E, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	J-1 G-2	J-3 A-1	N-6 J-2 A-1 G-1
Whose responsibility is it to monitor and evaluate student's progress and IEP goals?	H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	E, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	E, E, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H		J-1 A-1 G-1	N-4 J-2 A-1 G-3
In measuring students progression of goals, as stated in the IEP, what type of assessments are used to show cumulative progress between grade levels?	E, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	E, E, M, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H	N-1 G-2	N-1 A-1 G-1	N-9 J-1
Level: E=elementary M=middle H=high school							

Student Assessment

Focus Question: How is students progress being assessed and monitored?

Professional Staff Category: (circle title that applies)

Special Ed Teacher Regular Ed Teacher Administrator Specialist Other

Level: (circle the level that applies)

Elementary Middle High School

1. What is your understanding of the NHEIAP ALT?

2. Who is responsible for the NHEIAP ALT?
(special ed teacher, regular ed teacher, school psychologist, specialist, administrators, or other)

3. What does the NHEIAP ALT assess?

4. When assessing students progress, what methods are used to communicated with parents, special ed, or regular ed teachers.

5. Whose responsibility is it to monitor and evaluate student's progress and IEP goals?

6. In measuring students progression of goals, as stated in the IEP, what type of assessments are used to show cumulative progress between grade levels?

Research Report: IEP Process and Paperwork

**Elena Genovese
Bill McBrien**

What would the IEP process and paperwork look like?

Focus questions were:

- Are IEP's written uniformly?
- Do parents feel they participate in the IEP process?

A file review at each grade level within three buildings (Heron Pond, Middle and the High School) was conducted. A sixteen-question survey was developed to measure parents' perspective on the IEP process and their involvement with the process. The survey was sent to sixty randomly chosen families, twenty at each level. Six were returned at each school level (plus one unknown). Data results of survey were returned and tallied yielding a return rate of 31%.

In reviewing files at each level we looked at consistency in format and in the monitoring process. Within each building we found three different formats, each containing the same information organized in a different manner. Also, a variety of methods are being used to monitor progress of goals and objectives. There were discrepancies district-wide and at building levels.

This lack of uniformity makes it difficult for parents to understand the method used to evaluate their child's progress. One system uses terms of *Proficient*, *Novice* or *Basic* represented by the letters *P*, *N* or *B*. In another system terms used are *Consistently*, *Generally*, *Needs Development*, *Processing* and *Not Yet Introduced* represented by the letters *C*, *G*, *N*, *P* and *Y*. A third format uses *Generally* as the highest rating.

The results of the survey demonstrated overwhelming parental support of the IEP process in the three survey questions involving communication between the special education professionals and parents. The survey reflected 57 positive responses and zero negative responses. Out of the two survey questions involving the special education process the survey reflected 29 positive and 10 negative responses. The final two survey questions regarding parent understanding of the IEP process reflected 36 positive responses, one negative response and one non-response.

Parent input on Question 7 regarding receipt of the IEP draft prior to the IEP meeting does not reflect district practices. Parents actually over estimated the district performance in this regard. In 13 out of 19 responses parents indicated IEP's were sent to them prior to the IEP meeting, yet this is not common practice in the district.

Conclusions:

The process of writing IEP's within the district is "Not Yet" consistent. We found three different IEP formats and methods of monitoring goals and objectives. This is a discrepancy that can be solved relatively easily with appropriate software and training.

Based on the survey information collected from parents we are at "Got It" regarding parent participation of the SPED process. However, data from informal sources indicates that parents are overestimating the district's performance in this area. Specifically, draft IEP's need to be sent to parents prior to IEP meetings and the district needs to communicate IEP progress on a consistent basis.

Perhaps a formal survey of administrators, teachers and special education teachers would provide further information regarding discrepancy between current practices and parent understanding of those practices.

<i>What would the IEP process and paperwork look like?</i>	
Got it!	<p>Parents collaborate with the regular education/special education team on a regular basis throughout the IEP/year. IEP's are written uniformly throughout the district, delineating what is needed for the child to progress through the regular curriculum.</p> <p>IEP goals and objectives are revisited at least as often as regular report card time and modified as indicated by assessment information.</p> <p>IEP software that uses standardized format and vocabulary for goals and objectives linked to regular curriculum standards is used throughout the district.</p>
Almost there...	<p>Parents are actively involved in develop the IEP and are active members of the team. Parents and teachers jointly revise the IEP.</p> <p>The IEP is based on assessment information gathered from the NHEIAP, district performance assessments, observations and interviews.</p> <p>The regularly scheduled IEP assessments are linked to directly to IEP goals which are based on the regular curriculum.</p> <p>IEP software is developed that uses standardized format and vocabulary for goals and objectives linked to regular curriculum standards throughout the district.</p>
Just learning	<p>Parents are provided with a draft IEP and an explanation of their rights prior to the scheduled IEP meeting. IEP's are written to district standards.</p> <p>Regular ed and special ed teachers jointly draft the IEP.</p> <p>Accommodations for the disability are written specifically for the student to access and progress in the regular curriculum.</p> <p>IEP software program with standardized goals, objectives and vocabulary through the district is being developed.</p>
Not yet	<p>Parents are encouraged to participate in the IEP meeting.</p> <p>The excessive amount of time being spent on paperwork is not an issue being addressed.</p> <p>There is no standardized process used to write IEP's.</p> <p>There are no standard tools of measurement or standard for mastery.</p> <p>Excessive amounts of accommodations are in IEP's; some are unnecessary.</p> <p>IEP software program does not have standardized goals, objectives or vocabulary.</p>

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question:		
What would the IEP process and paperwork look like?		
Data Source:		
File review		
Data Collection Method		
Information needed:		
Are IEP's written uniformly?		
Focus question(s):		
Are IEP's being written uniformly?		
Reporting strategy(s):		
Analysis of file review		
Resources needed:		
File reviews – access to all SPED files		
Responsibility Action Matrix		
Next Steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/ due date
1. File review – choose one from each grade level	Bill & Elena	2/19/02
2. Call Johanna Weick regarding files	Elena	3/15/02
5. Contact Laurie Johnson for disk	Bill	3/15/02
7. Final collection and review	Bill & Elena	4/10/02

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question:		
What would the IEP process and paperwork look like?		
Data Source:		
Parent survey, interview teachers		
Data Collection Method		
Information needed:		
Parent involvement		
Focus question(s):		
How do parents participate in SPED process?		
Reporting strategy(s):		
Analysis of survey results		
Resources needed:		
Parent survey		
Responsibility Action Matrix		
Next Steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/ due date
1. Write letter to parents	Bill & Elena	3/8/02
2. Make up the survey	Bill & Elena	3/8/02
3. Contact Laurie Johnson for disk	Bill	3/15/02
4 Distribute survey by 3/15/02	Bill & Elena	3/15/02
5. Final collection and review	Bill & Elena	4/10/02

**MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL EDUCATION
PARENT SURVEY RESULTS**

Please circle your choice:

How are you notified of a special education meeting regarding your child?

Phone	Mail	Other	
16	6	1	9-both

Do you know who your child's special education case manager is?

Yes	No
19	0

Are you contacted by your child's case manager if there are any problems?

Yes	No
19	0

If yes, how are you contacted?

Phone	Mail	Other	
17	2	1	2-both phone & mail (1-also notified when at school)

Do you feel comfortable contacting your child's case manager regarding your child?

Yes	No
19	0

How do you contact the case manager?

Phone	Mail	Other	
18	1		1-both phone & mail 1-both mail & other

Do you receive a draft of your child's IEP before you come to the IEP meeting?

Yes	No
13	6

If no, would you like a draft sent home?

Yes	No
1	3

Do you receive a "Parent's Procedural Rights Booklet" at every special education meeting regarding your child?

Yes	No
16	4

Have you read this booklet?

Yes	No	Part of it
17	0	2

Would you like the procedures in this booklet better explained to you?

Yes	No	
2	16	1-unanswered

Would you feel comfortable asking for more explanation?

Yes	No
18	1- not necessary

Do you feel you have an adequate understanding of the IEP process?

Yes	No
19	0

Do you feel as if you are a true member of the IEP team?

Yes	No	
17	1	1-unanswered

Would you like the IEP process further explained to you?

Yes	No
1	18

In order to get more information regarding special education, in what setting would you prefer to meet with a special education teacher?

Individually	Group	Neither	Both
6	4	0	9

Please use this space (and the back of this sheet if necessary) to include any other concerns regarding special education procedures in Milford. Thank you.

OPTIONAL

Name:

School:

Grade level:

Research Report: Instructional Strategies

**John Foss
Catherine Kendall
Jill Larro**

What types of instructional strategies would be used in the classroom?

Our research question was, "What would Best Instructional Strategies look like?" The Instructional Strategies Sub-group met on February 6, 2002 for the purpose of developing the focus question(s) to determine how the Milford School District is meeting the instructional need of all students. This study included both Regular and Special Education children. The team decided to attempt to observe in two classrooms at each grade level from Readiness through 12th grade.

We sent out an introductory letter that explained to all teaching staff who we were and what we were trying to accomplish. Although we received a few volunteers who would allow us to observe in their classrooms and clarify any questions through interviews, insufficient individuals responded. We felt that a valid sampling needed to include two at each grade level except for Readiness that needed only one. We contacted the administration at all 3 levels and were still unable to meet our goal. A total of 25 observations were needed. We received only 11 responses and we felt this was not adequate for our purpose.

The team reconvened and decided to abandon the observational research design. The members of the team choose to attempt a survey of school staff as another means of assessing instructional strategies. By reworking the descriptors that were "wordsmithed" and approved by the full Special Education Assessment Committee, we crafted a ten question survey. We sent this survey out to 180 staff members and we collected 45 responses with two surveys completed by teams of four teachers together. The surveys were divided into three groups of 15. All three of the members of the subcommittee scored responses on each survey separately using the rubric that follows:

- 1- Not there
- 2- Getting there
- 3- Almost there
- 4- Got it

The 10 questions were assigned a score and these scores were averaged to get a total survey score from each team member. The 3 averages for each were then totaled and averaged. We had a totaled average for each of the forty-five surveys. Upon looking at these results, it was determined that method did not provide us with the type of information that we needed. We then recorded the score each of us gave to each question. This gave us a total of 135 scores per question (3 members X 45 survey responses for each question) These were reported as averages of the sum (1+2+.....divided by 135). We carried these averages out to two decimal points and then we compared these numbers to the rubric to gage how the school district was "measuring up" in the area of instructional strategies against the rubric.

From the comments on our surveys we found that there was a variety of understandings about the meaning of the term instructional strategy. Instruction ranges from lecture-noting to extensive student self-discovery; from strategies prevalent in the 1970's to cutting edge instruction found in best school practices. The results are as follows:

Question Number

1. - 2.76 Instructional Modalities
- 2a. - 1.78 Working with Special Education teacher on plans
- 2b. - 1.42 Co-teaching
3. - 2.33 Group activities development
4. - 2.11 Assessment are used in the development of plans
5. - 2.52 Instructional strategies
6. - 2.11 Are Methods, Curriculum, and Assessments intertwined
7. - 2.30 Classroom environment
8. - 58.5% Are there sufficient Materials, supplies, Equipment
9. - 58.5% Staff development is meeting staff needs

Since the goal we are striving for is a 4.00 in each of these areas, we have a ways to go according to the results. We feel that our schools should include instruction that appeals to multiple modalities. Co-teaching and planning should involve both special education and regular educators. The method of grouping for instruction should use strategies that are flexible and respectful of diversity. We believe that a variety of instructional strategies should be used. It is necessary for instruction, curriculum and assessment to be linked. The learning environment should be appropriate for all students. Teachers should have adequate materials, supplies and equipment to meet the needs of all students. All professional stakeholders should be involved in staff development and that evaluations will include assessment of professional growth and knowledge of best practices.

It seems the data is reliable to draw initial conclusion about our school district's level of development towards reaching its goal in the area of instructional strategies. Our greatest areas of weakness are in collaboration between Regular Education and Special Education. The sub-group feels that more time needs to be provided for staff to get together and discuss the best strategies. Our greatest strengths appear to be in the area of instructional modalities and strategies. Although we have not reached our goals concerning the research question – "Instructional Strategies", we as a school district are making significant progress or between "Just learning" and "Almost there" on the rubric.

<i>What types of instructional strategies would be used in the classroom?</i>	
Got it!	<p>In ALL Classrooms...</p> <p>Instruction appeals to multiple modalities. (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile) Co-teaching and planning involve both special education and regular education teachers. Grouping strategies are flexible and respectful of diversity and ability. Assessments are used to plan instruction. A variety of instructional strategies are used. Instruction/Curriculum/Assessment are linked. The learning environment is appropriate for all kids. Adequate materials, supplies and equipment are available to meet the needs of all students</p> <p>Evaluators, supervisors, teachers and peers are involved in staff development. Everyone knows what is expected and is assessed regularly and appropriately to ensure professional growth and knowledge of best practices.</p>
Almost there....	<p>In MOST Classrooms...</p> <p>The components listed in "Got it!" are implemented.</p> <p>Strategies that teachers are developing are recognized as appropriate and effective. Additional training and support is available in the areas recognized as in need of improvement for ALL STAFF.</p>
Just learning	<p>In SOME Classrooms...</p> <p>The components listed in "Got it!" are implemented.</p> <p>There is a plan to assess and support the ongoing professional development needs of staff.</p>
Not yet	<p>Effective instructional strategies for differentiation are used sporadically. There is no plan for professional development.</p>

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question: What types of instructional strategies will be used in the classroom?		
Data Source: Observation		
Data Collection Method		
Information needed: To observe our present practices in instruction		
Focus question(s): Is the classroom environment conducive to meeting the needs of regular education and special education students?		
Reporting strategy(s): Anecdotal observation information, interviews		
Resources needed: Volunteers from the professional staff		
Responsibility Action Matrix		
Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1. Letter to educational staff requesting observation of classroom	John Foss, Catherine Kendall, Jill Larro	February 12
2. Subcommittee meeting to determine date of observations	John, Catherine and Jill	February
3. Each committee member will observe 4 classrooms from each grade level using a sample reporting strategies matrix (modified version)	John – MHS, MMS Jill – MHS, MES Catherine – MMS, MES	Month of March
4. Strategy abandoned – lack of teacher volunteers to observe	John, Catherine and Jill	February
5. Compile data utilizing sample reporting strategies matrix (modified version)	John, Catherine and Jill	
6. Analyze the data and summarize	John, Catherine and Jill	

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question:

What types of instructional strategies will be used in the classroom?

Data Source: Survey

Data Collection Method

Information needed:

To determine the effectiveness of our present instructional practices

Focus question(s):

1. How do your instructions appeal to multiple modalities?
2. Do you work with Special Education teachers in developing your lesson plans? Do you ever co-teach with Special Education teachers?
3. Are flexibility, diversity and ability considered in developing group activities? Explain.
4. How are assessments used to develop lesson plans?
5. What types of instructional strategies are used in your classroom?
6. Does your teaching use various instructional methods, follow the district curriculum and include reasonable assessment? Describe.
7. Describe your classroom environment.
8. Do you have adequate materials, supplies and equipment to meet the needs of all students?
9. Do you feel that your needs and concerns are incorporated into staff development activities planned by the school district? If no, how could we better incorporate your thoughts?

Reporting strategy(s):

Data from the survey will be numerically scored and incorporated into a spreadsheet.

Resources needed:

Surveys returned.

Responsibility Action Matrix

Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1. Meetings to draft cover letter and survey. Distributed 180 surveys	John Foss, Catherine Kendall, Jill Larro	February 6 & 13 March 11 & 15
2. Collected surveys and individually evaluated each response to each question on survey using the rubrics designed by SPEDMIP.	John, Catherine and Jill	March 27
3. Input of data reviewed from surveys	John Foss	April 9
4. Analyze the data and summarize	John, Catherine and Jill	April 10

Survey Results: Instructional Strategies

Copy of Surveys:

Distributed – 180

Returned – 53

Rate of return 29.4%

Two types of survey data:

Composite scores for each survey question

Raw scores for each survey question

Point system: (reflects rubric determined by the whole committee)

1 – Not yet

2 – Just learning

3 – Almost there

4 – Got it

Due to lack of sufficient volunteers, observation of classrooms was not done.

Composite Scores for each survey question

Question # on the Survey	Average Rubric Score	Topic of Question
1	2.76	Instructional Modalities
2A	1.78	Working w/ SpEd Teacher on Plans
2B	1.42	Co-teaching
3	2.33	Group Activities
4	2.11	Assessments Used in Planning
5	2.52	Instructional Strategies
6	2.11	Methods, Curriculum, Assessment
7	2.3	Classroom Environment
8	58.50%	Materials, Supplies, Equipment
9	58.50%	Staff Development

SURVEY

1. How do your instructions appeal to multiple modalities (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile)?
2. a. Do you work with Special Education teachers in developing your lesson plans? b. Do you ever co-teach with Special Education teachers?
3. Are flexibility, diversity and ability considered in developing group activities?
Explain:
4. How are assessments used to develop lesson plans?
5. What types of instructional strategies are used in your classroom?

SURVEY CONTINUED

6. Does your teaching use various instructional methods; follow the district curriculum and include reasonable assessment? Describe:

7. Describe your classroom environment.

8. Do you have adequate materials, supplies and equipment available to meet the needs of all students?

9. Do you feel that your needs and concerns are incorporated into staff development activities planned by the school district? If no, how could we better incorporate your thoughts?

Grade Level

Due March 15th

Research Report: Support and Special Assistance

**Karen Alexander
Marsha Feder
Kristin Marshall**

How would support and special assistance for student needs be delivered?

Research Design: Survey

Background:

The rubric asks, "How would support and special assistance for student needs be delivered?" The rubric provided the basis for the development of the survey. It was our intention to provide a least invasive mechanism for teacher to participate in this process. The compliance rating scale of the rubric and the detailed elements of each level were used to develop a ten question survey around the question of delivery of service to students based on a Likert scale.

Method:

A random selection of teachers across grade and content areas was selected by each of the three researchers. At the elementary level a 15% rate of participation was realized, 14% at the middle school and 14% at the high school.

Data: What follows is a summary of the data by question.

- (1) Across grade levels special education students are included in the classroom.
- (2) The data indicates that generally class size is appropriate.
- (3) Generally parents do participate in the process.
- (4) Thirty two percent indicate that team teaching is used as a delivery method at the middle and high school levels.
- (5) Eighty percent of respondents report inadequate time allotted for planning and collaboration.
- (6) Generally it is felt that IEP's are based on standards and student needs.
- (7) The data strongly suggest that IEP teams consistently manage placement and delivery of services.
- (8) Generally alternative methods of instruction and assessment are used in the classroom.
- (9) The data indicate a high degree of adequacy and appropriateness of special education services in the classroom.
- (10) Respondents strongly agree that individual needs are being met in the classroom.

Summary:

The researchers agree that a larger sample than time constraints permitted would be desirable. While the survey was random and representative of grade levels, the sample was small. Despite this, it is worth noting that class size is more of an issue at the middle school than at other levels. It is also noted that alternative methods of instruction and assessment are more common at the elementary school level.

Research Design: Classroom Observation

Background:

The research design also included classroom observations. A matrix was developed to record observations based on the rubric. Observations were done at each of the three levels: elementary, middle and secondary. Three to six classrooms were observed per level. The matrix shows a compilation of responses for each level and each class.

Data:

Six classes were observed at the elementary level. In three classes in-class remediation was evident, and in one class there was a pull-out. In one class the curriculum was modified, and in two accommodations were being made. In five classes, the special education teacher was present and in two there was also a special education associate present.

Three classes were observed at the middle school. In two classes team teaching was evident. There were no support staff in the third class. All three classes incorporated in-class remediation. No pullouts or modifications to curriculum were used; however, accommodations were made as needed.

Five classes were observed at the high school level. In all five classes special education associates were present. There was no team teaching, pull-out or modified curriculum in any of the classes observed. There was in-class remediation in one class and accommodations in all classes.

Summary:

Again the researchers note that while the sample was random and across grade levels, it was small. Additionally, the researchers would recommend the addition of interviews with teachers.

Conclusions

In our district, inclusion is the practice; however, it should be noted that students are leveled into ability groups at the elementary and high school levels which tends to cluster special education students into the lower groups. At the middle school this is not the case since classes employ heterogeneous grouping. In terms of the rubric, it appears that the district is at the "Just learning" stage. This is supported by the data which indicate that some team teaching and collaboration are used. It is interesting to note that the survey indicated a need for planning time to implement these practices.

<i>How would support and special assistance for student needs be delivered?</i>	
Got it!	<p>Full inclusion and meeting individual needs are the norm.</p> <p>There is equity based on needs: programs and resources are available to support ALL students.</p> <p>Class size is not based on square footage but on student needs.</p> <p>Parents are collaborators in the educational process of their child.</p>
Almost there	<p>Team teaching/collaboration is the most common method of delivering services.</p> <p>IEP's are based on standards and student needs.</p> <p>The team manages placement and delivery of services.</p> <p>Class sizes are defined and are appropriate to the developmental level of students, academic expectations, and safety needs of the class.(i.e. Class size in Precision Machining course at the high school is small because of safety needs with heavy machinery)</p> <p>Parents participate in the educational process of their child.</p>
Just learning	<p>More services are delivered in inclusionary settings than pull out.</p> <p>The regular education teacher and the special education teacher collaborate to manage special education service delivery and program including team teaching and other best practices.</p> <p>There is an attempt to keep class size reasonable based on student, class and academic needs.</p> <p>Parent input in the education of their child is actively encouraged.</p> <p>Alternative methods of instruction and assessment are attempted in classroom settings.</p>
Not yet	<p>There is an implied dual track: regular ed/special ed.</p> <p>Remediation is reactionary: student fails first.</p> <p>Curriculum is standardized throughout the district.</p> <p>The solution is the quickest and the cheapest.</p> <p>Parents demonstrate a low level of involvement.</p>

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question:

How would support and special assistance for student needs be delivered?

Data Source:

Observations

Data Collection Method

Information needed:

To determine to what degree support and special assistance is delivered according to the rubric

Focus question(s):

How are special assistance and support services delivered?

Reporting strategy(s):

Observation matrix with observable classroom supports

Resources needed:

Classrooms to observe

Responsibility Action Matrix

Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1. Develop observation matrix and plan observation strategy	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	February 19
2. Type up matrix, questions to Laurie	Marsha	March 4
3. Conduct observations and collect data	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	By March 18
4. Meet to share data, discuss presentation	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	March 18
5. Develop reporting grid. Type in compiled data.	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	April 1

Support and Special Assistance

**Focus Questions: Are special education students fully included?
How are support services being provided?**

Description of class	Level	SPED staff involved	Number of students		Team teaching	Class split into groups	SPED staff provides support	In-class remediation	Pull - out	Curriculum modified	Accommodations being made
			RED	SPED							
Reading 4	E	Teacher Assoc.	9	10	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Reading 3	E	Teacher	14	6	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Math 4	E	Teacher	16	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Math	E	Assoc	0	4	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Writing	E	Teacher	16	6	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Math	E	Teacher Assoc	13	10	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Math	M	Teacher	18	4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	As Needed	Yes
English	M	Teacher Assoc	20	7	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	As needed
English	M	None	13	2	NA	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Am. Studies	H	Assoc	8	4	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Math	H	Assoc	4	8	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
English	H	Assoc	14	9	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Science	H	Assoc	20	2	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Culinary	H	Assoc	7	3	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes

Level: E=elementary M=middle H=high school

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process

Research Design Template

Research Question:

How would support and special assistance for student needs be delivered?

Data Source:

Survey

Data Collection Method

Information needed:

To determine to what degree support and special assistance is delivered according to the rubric

Focus question(s):

How are special assistance and support services delivered?

Reporting strategy(s):

Survey questions aligned to the rubric with a likert scale

Resources needed:

Surveys returned from teachers for data

Responsibility Action Matrix

Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1. Develop survey questions and plan who will receive them to fill out.	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	February 19
2. Type up survey to distribute.	Marsha	March 4
3. Distribute surveys to each grade level and collect.	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	By March 18
4. Meet to share data, discuss how to present, questions to Laurie.	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	March 18
5. Develop reporting grid. Type in compiled data.	Karen, Kristin and Marsha	April 1

Inclusion and Delivery of Service Survey Results

	Elementary						Middle						High						District					
	N	S	O	U	A		N	S	O	U	A		N	S	O	U	A		N	S	O	U	A	
1. Special education students are included in your classroom.	0	0	0	3	6		0	0	0	2	6		0	0	0	2	3	3	0	0	2	8	15	
2. Class size is appropriate to student needs.	0	3	0	4	2		0	4	2	2	0		0	1	4	2	1	1	0	8	6	8	3	
3. Parents are collaborators in the educational process of their children.	0	2	3	1	3		0	5	1	2	0		0	2	2	2	2	2	0	9	6	5	5	
4. Team teaching is used as a method of service delivery.	0	3	1	3	2		5	0	1	1	1		4	2	1	0	1	1	9	5	3	4	4	
5. There is time allotted for planning and collaboration between regular and special education staff.	1	7	0	1	0		0	5	2	0	1		3	4	1	0	0	0	4	16	3	1	1	
6. IEPs are based on standards and student needs.	0	1	1	5	2		0	4	1	2	1		0	1	2	4	1	1	0	6	4	11	4	
7. IEP teams manage placement and delivery of services.	0	1	0	3	5		0	4	1	2	0		0	1	0	5	2	2	0	6	1	10	7	
8. Alternative methods of instruction and assessment are used in your classroom.	0	1	1	5	2		0	4	3	0	1		0	4	2	1	1	1	0	9	6	6	4	
9. Special education services in your classroom are adequate and appropriate.	0	1	1	5	2		0	3	2	3	0		1	2	1	4	0	0	1	6	4	12	3	
10. Individual student needs are being met in your classroom.	0	0	1	5	3		0	1	1	6	0		0	0	3	5	0	0	0	1	5	16	3	

Dear Teachers:

As part of the Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process mandated by the state, we are gathering information to evaluate how the district supports special education students and provides for students' needs.

Please help us by filling out this survey at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

- | | Never | Sometimes | Often | Usually | Always |
|---|-------|-----------|-------|---------|--------|
| 1. Special education students are included in your classroom. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Class size is appropriate to student needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Parents are collaborators in the educational process of their children. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Team teaching is used as a method of service delivery. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. There is time allotted for planning and collaboration between regular and special education staff. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. IEP's are based on standards and student needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. IEP teams manage placement and delivery of services. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Alternative methods of instruction and assessment are used in your classroom. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Special education services in your classroom are adequate and appropriate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Individual student needs are being met in your classroom. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Additional comments:

Compliance Visit

MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPLIANCE REVIEW VISIT

This year the New Hampshire Department of Education has changed the Special Education Program Approval Process to reflect the quality of the programming and service delivery of school districts in the state. The approval process has changed from that of a compliance inspection and file review by a visiting team to one of self-assessment and continuous improvement by the district. A visiting team of 12 regular and special educators collaborated with Milford district special education team members at each building to review data collected by the district on two or three representative case studies of identified students. The collaborative team in each building then conducted interviews with the parents of each student being reviewed and observed that student in an instructional setting.

The New Hampshire Department of Education has identified three areas of focus for the district program approval process: access to the general curriculum, transition and assessment. The role of the external (visiting) team members is to work with the internal (district) team members to (1) review the case study, interview and observation evidence presented and collected with respect to each focus area; (2) clarify the information presented; (3) identify the strengths of the district's services; and (4) suggest areas for district improvement. The data and findings are then summarized for each building by the individual building teams. The Milford School District will incorporate these building summaries into its special education improvement plan as a culmination of its year long special education program improvement process.

***Program Approval Review Team
April 8-9, 2002***

<i>Helene Bureau</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, MES</i>
<i>Susan Decloedt</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, MMS</i>
<i>Paula Durand</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, MES</i>
<i>Renea Elsten</i>	<i>Sped Director, Mont Vernon</i>
<i>Elizabeth Garniss</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, MHS</i>
<i>Laura Gautier</i>	<i>Special Education Associate, MHS</i>
<i>Ken Griffin</i>	<i>Principal, SAU #63</i>
<i>Colleen Hackett</i>	<i>Assistant Director of Special Services</i>
<i>Judith Harrington</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, SAU #42</i>
<i>Deborah Heath Barlow</i>	<i>Portsmouth HS, SAU #52</i>
<i>Carin Illig</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, MHS</i>
<i>Dick Lates</i>	<i>SERESC Consultant</i>
<i>Ruth Littlefield</i>	<i>Bureau of Early Learning, NH DOE</i>
<i>Brenda Martinez</i>	<i>MEEE, Preschool Teacher</i>
<i>Kerry Keegan</i>	<i>Speech Pathologist, MSD</i>
<i>Kathleen Niesen</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, SAU #34</i>
<i>Judith Pasternak</i>	<i>Special Education Coordinator, SAU #10</i>
<i>Richard Pratt</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, SAU #53</i>
<i>Deborah Queeney</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, MMS</i>
<i>Carol Schapira</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, SAU #24</i>
<i>Karen Taylor</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher, SAU #42</i>
<i>Bryan Terry</i>	<i>COTA, SAU #1</i>
<i>Johanna Weick</i>	<i>Director of Special Services, MSD</i>
<i>Leigh Zoellick</i>	<i>Ed. Consultant, Institute on Disabilities</i>

May 21, 2002

<i>Mary Clare Heffernan</i>	<i>NH DOE</i>
<i>Dick Lates</i>	<i>SERESC Consultant</i>
<i>Laurie Schooley</i>	<i>Teacher, Sage School</i>
<i>Jenny Shakelford</i>	<i>Teacher, Sage School</i>
<i>Johanna Weick</i>	<i>Director of Special Services, MSD</i>

Compliance Visit Summary

<u>Themes of Improvement:</u>	<u>District Wide</u>
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation of transitions should be put in writing. This would include transitions prior to entering the school district as well as transitions within the district from grade to grade. This would also include transitions between building levels, as well as transition plans for graduation. - Transition plans need to be more comprehensive and have more follow through. - Paperwork is needed to assess if the transitions are effective.
Communication and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage parent feedback when writing IEP's. - More time needs to be available for communication and planning between regular ed. and special ed. - More collaboration needed with regular ed. when writing progress reports.
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hardware and software are needed for consistency throughout the district in developing IEP's.
<u>Themes of Strengths:</u>	<u>District Wide</u>
Administrative support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong administrative support is available throughout the district - Professional development is available - IDEA '97 changes are in place - Access to district standards and curriculum
Inclusive system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The system is inclusive - Allows for access to curriculum for students - The district has a philosophy of inclusion - Involvement in extra-curricular activities is available
Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appears to be parent satisfaction and involvement in the special education process
Regular Ed. / Special Ed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appears to regular education ownership of IEP's at the elementary and preschool levels
Continuum of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong support throughout the district to assist in continuum of services - Staffing: social worker, guidance, psychologist, secretarial support are provided at each level - Students are kept within the school district if at all possible
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of multiple assessments are used to measure student progress - Portfolios are developed on students.

Compliance Visit: Results By Level

PRESCHOOL	STRENGTHS	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
	The staff is outstanding, dedicated, professional, experienced utilizing continuous improvement methodologies, creative curriculum	Develop a process to engage the parent's feedback in development of IEP goals. Parent education and training would be highly productive at this level.
	Early childhood model for curriculum engages students early into accessing the general curriculum.	Cider Grant application supports movement in curriculum integration. Ongoing professional development and visitations to other preschools and to write goals and objectives reflective of the general curriculum.
	Quality, visually appealing setting with limited space options. The transition process is fine tuned on an ongoing basis, special ed, guidance from the elementary is involved early on in the year, prior to movement to elementary.	Find the means necessary to engage regular elementary personnel as early as possible.
	Early Intervention is flowing smoothly this year.	Public Kindergarten for all students. Review the therapeutic balance of related services within the general classroom. Modeling integration of services.
ELEMENTARY	Grade 1 reading tutors, program assistants.	Documentation of transition in writing. All the informal things that are done.
	Staffing of building with Sped secretary. Full time school psychologist.	Need up-to date hardware, in the sped. Department.
	Number of paraprofessionals, excellent	
	Wide range of continuum of services.	
	Computer software program.	
	Administration is strength. FM system, materials as needed.	

Compliance Visit: Results By Level

	Student to teacher ratio is excellent.	
	Team teaching is utilized. Regular education staff easy to facilitate with. Identified students belong to regular education staff as well.	
MIDDLE	The communication between sped, parents, students and regular education teacher.	Make sure a phone is available in the SLD program.
	The continuum of services is a major strength.	Develop paperwork to assess transition planning
	Support of Administration – they are very involved and committed to all students.	Increase collaborative time if possible due to time constraints between regular Ed and sped. Administration is always readily available.
	The way in which the student body welcomes Spec. Ed. students	Communication between regular and sped staff – need more time.
	Instructional associates are very professional. High quality of associates.	
	Staff development and training organized by the administration is strong.	
	Great communication between parents and administration and staff.	
	SPED secretary, social worker	
	Building was conducive to learning – nice facility.	
HIGH SCHOOL	Access to general curriculum with non-disabled students, at level appropriate for them. Some are in A level, some in B level, some in supported classrooms.	Transition planning for all students. Needs to be more comprehensive, follow thru.
	Supported classrooms	Supports in non-academic classes.

Compliance Visit: Results By Level

	Use of tools available from sped dept. i.e. 3 year re-evals, weekly progress reports, observations.	Need more collaboration with regular ed staff to meet requirement of 8 progress and report cards and IEP development annually. Access NHEIAP info for IEP.
	School social worker, guidance, stay in school coordinator.	Documenting progress of IEP when redoing IEP software.
	Excellent opportunities for students to learn vocational skills, exposure to careers and also what they may want to pursue post secondary.	
	Student services, career assessment for all sped children	Counseling for EH students.

SAGE SCHOOL	Significant improvements have been made since the last visit in 5/01.	Transitions to and from the main campuses need to be consistent.
	All previously identified issues have been addressed.	There needs to be increased coordination/consultation with regular education teachers for content areas.
	Students are succeeding and thriving.	The facility is insufficient.
	The teachers have impressive and genuine relationships with the students.	There needs to be a process developed to increase access to the guidance and psychology departments.
	The program was identified as, "very helpful" by the students.	Visitations to other similar schools would be beneficial to the staff.
	Availability to the main campuses is extremely beneficial, as it focuses on bridging the students into the system.	When the school moves and student numbers increase, an additional teacher should be hired.
	Staff is dedicated and enthusiastic and know what the students need.	Computers for the middle school needs to be addressed
	Class.com and E Block increased the availability of the program for students.	

Goals and Objectives

Milford School District
Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process

Final Goal: To improve the collaboration and communication processes amongst regular educators, special educators, parents and students to ensure that all students are successful in meeting the standards of the curriculum

Objectives:

- 1. to develop a consistent language and format for writing IEP's throughout the district**
- 2. to develop consistent and varied assessment practices to measure student progress in achieving the curriculum**
- 3. to develop a process to facilitate a successful transition for students from grade level to grade level and from building to building**
- 4. to use a collaborative decision making process in the development of curriculum and instruction**
- 5. to commit time and resources so that the IEP process will be collaborative in planning, delivery of services and assessment of results**

Conclusions

Conclusions

As a result of the NH DOE's requirement to monitor local school districts implementation of state and federal guidelines in relation to special education, the Milford School District has participated in a yearlong Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process (SPEDMIP). As a whole, the Milford Special Education Department has fared quite well in areas that have been studied by both internal and external team members during the 2001-2002 school year. Significant areas of strength and growth since the last visit were recognized. In addition, areas for development were identified to continue the efforts towards ongoing improvement of educational opportunities for our youth in Milford.

The research that has been conducted over the past year, in conjunction with the level compliance visits, have resulted in the establishment of goals and objectives for the special education department for the next five years. We recognize that these goals are extensive and require further research due to the relatively small sampling we have been able to obtain within the year and the resulting need for more specificity. However, the goals and objectives have identified common needs for the special education department that are attainable with further research and study.

Furthermore, due to the varied constituents represented on the committee, the goals and objectives identify the needs of special education from a systemic perspective rather than from a purely departmental view. In light of the new special education regulatory requirements, in addition to the overall district goals for all students, it is necessary to have each department and level work in a cohesive fashion towards the achievement of outcomes. As a result, the goals of the special education department are in alignment with those of the Milford School District resulting in a fundamental shift from separate to collaborative processes for all youth.

Glossary

Glossary

Heterogeneous grouping - Students are randomly placed resulting in varied needs/abilities in a class/team.

Homogeneous grouping - Students are placed based upon similar needs and/or abilities.

Curriculum - The alignment of concepts, skills and processes across the grades based on agreed upon standards.

Instruction - The teaching methods, strategies, materials, etc, used to deliver the curriculum.

Assess - Ongoing review of student progress.

Evaluation - A cumulative analysis of progress; in special education, utilized to determine whether a child has a disability that requires special education.

Monitor - Ongoing review of student progress and effectiveness of goals and benchmarks with ensuring adjustment of teaching strategies.

Differentiate - Instruction: Varying instruction as to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

Varied Methods of Assessment - The use of multiple strategies to assess what a student knows and/or is able to do.

Varied Instructional Strategies - The use of multiple strategies to teach students.

Benchmark - Major developmental milestones which indicate expected levels of performance to describe progress toward achieving annual goals.

National Standards - A national threshold that represents the level of acceptable performance on an assessment of a particular skill or domain. These are statements that are about what students should know and be able to do on a national level.

NH Frameworks - The threshold that represents the acceptable level of performance on an assessment of a particular skill or domain. These are statements that are about what NH values, what NH has determined students know and be able to do by the end of grade 12.

"The Team" - LEA Representative, appropriate evaluator(s), parent(s), special education provider(s), regular education provider(s).

Goal - Annual statement of what a child is expected to know and be able to do.

Objective - See "Benchmark".

NH Resources via the web -

<http://www.ed.state.nh.us/specialed/nheiap-alt.htm>.

NHEIAP-Alt - An alternative assessment for students who are unable to participate in the general state assessment due to the severity of their disability.

Appendix

Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process Research Design Template

Research Question:
Data Source:
Data Collection Method
Information needed:
Focus question(s):
Reporting strategy(s):
Resources needed:

Responsibility Action Matrix		
Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline/due date
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Focus Questions: Are teachers using a variety of classroom assessments? Are the assessments appropriate for both regular education and special education students?

Level: E=elementary M=middle H=high school

Sample Reporting Strategy: Anecdotal Interview

Focus Question: How much do teachers know about the NHEIAP Alt?

Professional staff category:

Special Ed Teacher Regular Ed Teacher Administrator Specialist Other

Level:

Elementary Middle High School

1. What is the NHEIAP ALT?
2. Why do we have the NHEIAP ALT?
3. Who is responsible for the NHEIAP ALT?
4. How do students qualify for the NHEIAP ALT?
5. How is data collected for the NHEIAP ALT?
6. What is assessed by the NHEIAP ALT?
7. How are the NHEIAP ALT results reported?